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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY,  
APRIL 3, 2003

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for April 3, 2003. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. Cumhuriyet/Bolge/Tercuman/Milliyet: It is reported that PKK-KADEK has expedited armament of its militants in Northern Iraq by reinforcing them with rockets and missiles. It is believed that the PKK has been seeking chemical weapons, too. Some 44 of these PKK militants had surrendered to security forces during operations in February and March 2003, while 192 had deserted from the organization. It is believed that the organization has 743 active members within Turkey, and 4550 of its armed militants are in northern Iraq. It is alleged that the organization purchased a 5 kilo chemical "substance" worth of Euro one million and brought it to northern Iraq via Iran, and subsequently has been keeping it under tight control.

3. Cumhuriyet: In an interview with Washington Post, a Kurdish leader, Nursirvan Mustafa, said there were 6,000 underground fighters in Kirkuk who were ready waiting for a nod from the US to start an uprising in the town. Mustafa said he did not know the reason why the US did not give approval for the uprising. The Kurdish leader said the Kurds wanted to be active participants in the war and "enhance their autonomy" in the post-war restructuring of Iraq. Mustafa said the total number of US troops in northern Iraq did not exceed 3,000 for the time being, and that the northern Front was still a "ghost front".

4. Cumhuriyet: Saddam Huseyin warned Celal Talabani in northern Iraq that he should not support the US in this war. In the message read by his Information Minister, Saddam said to Talabani: "I am warning you not to get engaged in activities that you would regret. You and your forces in alliance with the foreigners should avoid warring against the Iraqi people and its army."

5. Evrensel: In a press release yesterday, a DEHAP member, Osman Ozelik, warned the Turkish government not to use Kurds as a pretext for an operation in northern Iraq. He asked the Turkish government to give up its paranoia about the situation south of the Turkish border. Ozelik added that "The existence of an autonomous Kurdish administration in northern Iraq, and its becoming one of the fundamental components of a possible federation to be established, are a reality of Iraq and an event that takes place beyond our borders." Ozelik said that the portrayal of PKK-KADEK militants as an obstacle to military operations in Iraq was not convincing because those militants were positioned in camps at Iraq-Iran border some 300 kilometers away from the Turkish border. Ozelik said necessary legal changes should be made to enable PKK militants to abandon their weapons and participate in democratic life in Turkey, and that there was no other way of removing PKK from being a danger.

6. Evrensel: Abdullah Ocalan's lawyers went to Gemlik Jandarma Station in order to visit their client at Imrali Island, but were not allowed to go to the island on the grounds of adverse weather conditions. The lawyers returned to Istanbul and announced that they had formally

requested the Justice Ministry buy a new boat. Meantime, Diyarbakir DEHAP's Provincial Womens' Committee Organization members held a press announcement in which they protested both against the war and against Abdullah Ocalan's isolation, calling for an end to the war and a general amnesty. In Adana and Siirt, DEHAP's women members protesting the war and Ocalan's isolation handed out carnations. Of 20 suspects arrested on the grounds of holding pro-Ocalan demonstrations in Yuksekova, two persons, Nuri Kurt and Serbest Abi, were ordered held on charges of assisting and harboring PKK-KADEK.

17. Cumhuriyet/Bolge/Tercuman/Evrensel: On one hand the US dispatches its military vehicles and equipment from the region, but on the other, they still keep their vehicles and equipment in the three factories they have hired in the Organized Industrial Zone nearby Kiziltepe. In addition, the U.S. has been building a helicopter pad at the KIDAS yarn factory inside the Organized Industrial Zone. The US continues shipping vehicles and equipment from the bases in Mardin and Tasucu of Mersin to Iskenderun port and Incirlik Air Force Base. It is reported that more Patriot batteries will be unloaded from a freighter that is expected to dock at Tasucu port today.

18. Dunya: During his one-day visit to Ankara, Secretary of State Colin Powell called on the

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Turkish President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, and Chief of TGS. Powell said they would be in cooperation with Turkey in rebuilding of Iraq, and that Turkey was an important member of the coalition forces, and while emphasizing Turkey's concerns about northern Iraq, the Secretary of State remarked that "There is no

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need for the Turkish soldiers to cross the border." Turkey and the US agreed on the following points, which will not require parliamentary approval: humanitarian convoys will go to northern Iraq via Turkey, and Turkey will be the intermediary for the humanitarian relief directed to Kirkuk; fuel for vehicles of US units deployed in northern Iraq will be supplied from Turkey, and will be carried in Turkish tankers; Turkey will facilitate US search-and-rescue operations in northern Iraq, from bases in Turkey; Turkey's inspection regime along the Iraqi border will be lightened, and the channels for fuel trade with peshmergas will be reopened.

19. Cumhuriyet/Radikal/Turkiye/Hurriyet/Tercuman/ Milliyet: It is reported that a convoy of 25 Turkish trucks carrying US military equipment passed through Habur border gate and arrived in Erbil in northern Iraq under US troops' protection. The TGS announced that permission had been granted for 204 Hummer jeeps brought to Turkey under modernization project to now cross into northern Iraq. Milliyet reports that military vehicles and equipment brought to Turkey under the site-preparations agreement have to be taken out of Turkey by May 6.

110. Milliyet: Gang members trying to extort money from merchants and police arrested businessmen in Adana at gunpoint. Based on a tip that some persons were trying to collect money for a promissory note a merchant was forced to sign, the police launched an operation that led to the arrest of the brothers Yusuf Demir and Ismet Demir. They were caught with weapons and 5 billion Turkish lira in their possession. As a result of a series of other operations, three more persons wanted by police involvement in urer ndother crieswer aresedi Adna

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11. Dnya Bsinssmen in Mersin applied the Ministry of Industry and Trade to qualify for designation as a Qualified Industrial Zone, QIZ. Regarding the issue, the President of Chamber of

Commerce and Industry of Mersin, Kadri Saban, said QIZs helped greatly to the development of cities and countries, and there had been talks between the US and Turkey for establishing QIZs in various regions in Turkey. He claimed that Mersin was the most appropriate place for such a project.  
HOLTZ